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LATVIAN ECONOMY ADVANCES IN POSTWAR PERIOD

In the postwar reconstruction of industry, the TsK KP(b) of Latvia directed its main attention to the complete restoration of power engineering plants, which had been demolished during the war, and to transport and communications equipment essential to the reconstruction of the entire national economy. The Kegumskaia GES, and the electric power plants in Riga, Liepaya, and Daugavpils, have been rebuilt. The production of electric power in the Latvian SSR in 1948 amounted to 320 million kilowatt-hours, or 167 percent of that of 1940.

At present, 1,700 kilometers of railroad tracks have been rebuilt. The Latvian railroad has exceeded the prewar level, with regard to average, daily freight loading, volumes of freight transport, and speed of railroad car turnover.

Seaports were restored and reconstructed. The river fleet was rebuilt and in 1948 reached the 1950 level for freight transport. A new powerful radio broadcasting station was built, and a new branch of communications, wire broadcasting, was established in the Republic.

Local fuel industry has been developed greatly, and 25 peat enterprises were reconstructed and put into operation. Compared with the prewar period, the peat industry has more than doubled its output.

The construction materials industry has exceeded the prewar level. The timber and paper industry has been restored. The Sloka Cellulose and Paper Combine is operating on a new technical basis. Match factories, furniture factories, and lumber mills have been put into operation.

A total of 1,500 various industrial enterprises were reconstructed and newly built in the Latvian Republic. New branches of industry were introduced, such as construction of electric trains, generators, motors and engines for electric railroad transport; automobile tractor equipment; hydrometeorological and measuring instruments; production of penicillin and citric acid from molasses; production of standard housing units; automatic telephone switchboards, etc.

The prewar level of industrial production was reached essentially in 1947. If the 1945 volume of industrial production in the Latvian SSR is taken as 100,

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production reached 188 in 1946, 270 in 1947, and 377 in 1948.

In 1948, there were 200,000 workers and employees in industry, construction work, and transport. Compared with 1945, the number of industrial workers increased by 75,000. During the past 4 years, 18,000 young skilled workers were trained in the Latvian SSR.

The Latvian Republic fulfilled the 1948 industrial production plan on 3 November, and gave the State 120 million rubles in savings above plan. However, in spite of the fact that the State production plan was surpassed as a whole, 175 enterprises did not fulfill their 1948 plan.

Insufficient attention is given to the quality of products. The Bureau of Tek KP(b) of Latvia especially pointed out the unsatisfactory quality of "very" radio receivers and the products of textile and food industries. The local and cooperative industries also produce a great many articles of poor quality.

Many enterprises of the Republic fulfilled the 1948 gross production plan ahead of schedule. Some of them have lowered production costs. But there are still some enterprises which operate at a loss due to bad organization and insufficient planning.

The continuous growth of industry and agriculture have considerably increased reserves of commodities for Soviet trade. In a short period of time, Soviet trade reached a level which made it possible to eliminate all private enterprises. In 1945, private trade constituted 10 percent of the retail turnover of commodities; in 1947 it was reduced to 2 percent; and in 1948 to zero.

Retail goods turnover in 1948 reached a total of over 4 billion rubles, as against 1.6 billions in 1945.

Average market prices in the city of Riga were reduced in 1948, as compared with 1947, as follows: butter 82 percent, meat 40 percent, potatoes 90 percent, milk 50 percent, wheat flour 50 percent.

The number of kolkhozes in the Latvian Republic is steadily growing. A year ago there were 189 kolkhozes in Latvia; now their number has increased to 1,050.

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